

OPEN LETTERS.

AERIAL TUBERS OF SOLANUM.

Editors Botanical Gazette:—W. R. Dodson, in the GAZETTE for January, refers to aerial tubers of *Solanum tuberosum*. It is well known that our varieties of potatoes in cultivation are obtained from selecting seedlings such as suit the cultivator best. From a thousand or two he may get only one, possibly two, three, or more, that he selects for further trial; the rest he abandons. Some eighteen years ago I grew 800 seedling potatoes from berries of several varieties. Among them were several which bore their tubers entirely on the stems above ground, and some produced tubers above and below also. One plant I remember in particular produced about 200 tubers, all at the surface of the ground and a little way above, none covered with the soil. These tubers were mostly the size of the ends of the thumb and fingers of a lady's hand. Of course, the plant was allowed to perish, as of no value. By selecting seedlings of this variable plant we can secure within certain limits anything we dare look for or expect.—W. J. BEAL, *Michigan Agricultural College.*